

The LOVER.

By MARMADUKE MYRTLE, Gent.

There dwelt the Scorn of Vice, and Pity too. Waller.

Tuesday, April 20. 1714.

TRUE Virtue distinguishes it self by nothing more conspicuously than Charity towards those who are so unhappy as to have, or be thought to have, taken a contrary Course; it is in the very Nature of Virtue to rejoice in all new Converts towards its Interests, and bewail the Loss of the most inconsiderable Votaries. It would perhaps be thought a Severity to make Conclusions of the innate Goodness of Ladies at a Visit, by this Rule: Beauty, Wit and Virtue, in those Conversations, generally receive all the Diminution imaginable, and little Faults, Imperfections and Misfortunes, are aggravated not without Bitterness.

Diſſina, tho' she is commended for singular Prudence and Oeconomy, appears in Conversation never to have known what it is to be careful.

Diſſina, who has no Virtue, or any thing like it but the forbearance of Vice, cannot endure the Applause of *Diſſina*. Ladies who are impatient of what is said to the Advantage of others, do not consider that they lay themselves open to all People of Discernment, who know that it is the want of good Qualities in themselves which makes People impatient of the Acknowledgment of them in others.

Among the many Advantages which one Sex has over the other, there is none so conspicuous, as, that the Fame of Men grows rather more just and certain by Examination, that of Women is almost irreparably lost by so much as a disadvantageous Rumour. This Case is so tender, that in order to the Redress of it, it is more safe to try to dissuade the Aspersers from their Iniquity, than exhort the Innocent to such a Fortitude as to neglect their Calumny.

It should, methinks, be a Rule to suspect every one who insinuates any thing against the Reputation of another, of the Vice with which they charge their Neighbour, for it is very unlikely it should flow from the Love of Virtue: The Repentment of the

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Virtuous towards those who are fallen, is that of Pity, and that is best exerted in Silence on the occasion. What then can be said to the numerous Tales that pass to and fro in this Town, to the Disparagement of those who have never offended their Accusers? As for my part, I always wait with Patience, and never doubt of Hearing in a little time for a Truth, the same Guilt of any Woman which I find the reports of another. It is, as I said, unnatural it should be otherwise, the Calumny usually flows from an Impatience of living under Severity, and they report the Sallies of others against the time of their own Escape. How many Women would be Speechless, if their Acquaintance were without Faults. There is a great Beauty in Town very far gone in this Vice. I have taken the Liberty to write her the following Epistle by the Penny-Post.

Madam,

I Have frequently had the Honour of being in your Company, and should have had a great deal of delight in it, had you not pleased to intermix that Happiness by the unmerciful Treatment you give all the rest of your Sex. Several of those I have heard you use unkindly were my particular Friends and Acquaintance. I can assure you all the Advantage you had above those you lessened on these Occasions, was that you were not absent, for the Company longed for the same Opportunity of speaking as freely of you. Believe me, your own Dress fits never the better on you, for tearing other People's Cloaths. While you are rifling every one that falls in your way, you cannot imagine how much that Fury discomposes your own figure. You believe you carried all before you the last time I had the Happiness to be where you were. As soon as your Cousin (whom you are too inadvertent to observe does not want Sense) had mentioned an agreeable young Lady which she met at a Visit in Soho Square,

'Square, you immediately contradicted her, and told her you had seen the Lady, and were so unhappy that you could not observe those Charms in her. Her Name, says your Cousin, is Mrs. *Dulcett*: The same, said you. Your Cousin replied, She is Tall and Graceful; you again with a scornful Smile, She is Long and Confident: But, says your Kinswoman, I cannot but think her Eye has a fine Languor; I don't know but she might, said you, if one could see her awake, but that Sleepiness and Insensibility in them added to her Ungainliness, makes me doubt whether I ever saw her, but as walking in her Sleep. Well; but her Understanding has something in it very lively and diverting: Ay, says you, they that will Talk all, or have Memories, cannot but utter something now and then that is passable. Your Cousin seem'd at a loss what to say in support of one she had pronounced to be so agreeable, and therefore she retired to the Lady's Circumstances (since you had disallowed any thing in her Person) and said her Fortune would make up for all, for she had now ten thousand Pounds, and would; if her Brother died, have almost two a Year. This too you knew the contrary of, and gave us to understand the utmost of her Fortune was four Thousand, and the Brother's Estate had a very heavy Mortgage, and when cleared would not be a neat Thousand a Year. Your Cousin, when you took so much Pains to contradict her Misrepresentations, grew grave with you, and told you, Since you were so positive, you were the only one in Town who did not think Mrs. *Dulcett*, besides her being a considerable Fortune, a Woman of Wit, that danced gracefully, sang charmingly, has the best Mein, the prettiest manner in every thing she did, that she had the least Affectation, the most Merit, was—Upon which you, with the utmost impatience, after ruffling your Fan; and riggling in your Seat, as if you had heard your Mother abused, rose up, and declaring you did not expect to be allowed one Word more in the Conversation, since your Cousin had once got the Discourse, left the Room. Your Cousin held the Lady of the House from following you out, and, instead of the Anger we thought her in when you were in the Room, fell into the most violent Laughter. When she came to her self, she prevented what we were going to say on the Occasion, by telling us, there was no such Creature in nature as Mrs. *Dulcett*, that she had laid this Plot against you for some Days, and was resolved to expose you for that scandalous Humour of yours, of allowing no Body to have any tolerable-good Qualities but your self: You see, said she, how suddenly she made Objections, from the sort of Character I gave the Woman, assigning the proper Imperfection to the Quality in her according to my Commendation. I think we said altogether, What, no such Woman in the World? What, said the Lady of the House, she to be so particular in the Estate mortgaged, and all those Dislikes to one she never saw, to one not in being, to one you had invented!—You may easily imagine what Raillery passed on the Occasion, and how you were used after such a Demonstration of your Censoriousness.

'I desire whenever hereafter you have the evil Spirit upon you to lessen any Body you hear commended, to think of Mrs. *Dulcett*: If you do not, you may assure your self, you will be told of her; among your Acquaintance, whenever any one is spoken ill of, Mrs. *Dulcett* is the Word, and no one minds what you say after you have been thus detected. I advise you to go out of Town this Season, go into a Milk Diet, and when you return with Country Innocence in your Blood, I will do Justice to your good Humour, and am,

Madam,

Your most Obedient, Humble Servant,

Marmaduke Myrtle.

The painful manner Women usually receive favourable Accounts of one another, shows that the Ill-nature in which this young Woman was detected, is not an uncommon Infirmary. But let every Woman know, she cannot add to her self what she takes from another; but all that she bestows upon another, will, by the discerning World, be restored ten-fold, and there can be no better Rule or Description of a right Disposition than this,

There dwelt the Scorn of Vice, and Pity too.

The Scorn of it, in Virtuous Persons, is in respect to themselves, the Pity in regard to others.

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